

The Health Reporter

YOUR HEALTH IS YOUR WEALTH

JUNE 2015

WHY I RELAY FOR LIFE

By Kathie Stroben, Nurse Practitioner



My first memory of cancer was losing my grandfather. It was in his throat. I was 10 or 11. We couldn't afford to go back to Pennsylvania for his funeral. And then it was an aunt. Liver. She left four children, teens, the same ages as me and my siblings. I was afraid, wondering who would be next. In high school, we all knew why our classmate was out. We whispered about it. His testicle. Surgery. At that age?! We were horrified, and embarrassed.

Then, as adult, and out of nursing school, I worked on a GYN-Oncology unit. Chemo. Radiation. Funerals. Tumor markers. Faces. Young, old. Black, White, Latino, Asian. Ovarian, cervical, uterine, vulvar. Wigs. Nausea so severe patients threw up as soon as they saw the hospital.

My cousin was next. Pancreas. It shook me to my core. She was my age. Her youngest wasn't even out of high school. And then my best friend's mom, who was a surrogate mother to me in my childhood. Ovarian. She never left the hospital after her surgery. My best friend was devastated. So was I. But I was also frustrated and felt helpless with the randomness of this beast: Cancer.

What do we know? What can we do? Paps. Colonoscopies. Mammograms. Stay active. Don't smoke! Sunblock. Eat fruits and veggies. Not too much alcohol. But even if you do all these things, it is no guarantee.

My first Relay for Life was at CSULB. I was empowered by walking, participating, raising money. I found community in others who had lost loved ones as I had. I was inspired to tears by the survivors. Finally something concrete that I could do.

My losses continued as our Relays moved to Rainbow Lagoon and then Millikan High School. My stepfather. Pancreas. My father-in-law. Throat. I got more involved. Most recently, my neighbor and friend. Breast. Her youngest and my son are best friends. She will be a survivor. I am more determined than ever. I raised money, raised awareness. I walked. I led the team. I did the Relay again this year.

To get involved with Relay for Life team, please email kathleen.stroben@longbeach.gov.

LONG BEACH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Upcoming Events

National Safety Month
June 2015

National Fresh Fruit and
Vegetable Month
June 2015

Relay for Life
Millikan High School
June 6, 2015

Beach Streets 7-Mile
Bike Tour
June 6, 2015

Law Enforcement
Career Fair
LB Police Academy
June 27, 2015

Free Diabetes Class
(English)
The Children's Clinic
Family Health Center
July 14, 2015

Free Diabetes Class
(Spanish)
Miller Family Health
Education Center
September 19, 2015



GETTING TO KNOW YOU
KEITH ALLEN
 Registered Environmental
 Health Specialist

How long have you been with the Health Department?

I have worked for the Health Department for 13 years as a Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS). Prior to this, I worked for the LA County Health Department for two years.

What is your role in the Environmental Health Bureau?

My current role in the Environmental Health Bureau is Supervisor of the Consumer Protection Program, which includes all Food, TREP, and Water program activities.

Why are food inspections important?

Regular food facility inspections are extremely important in protecting public health. The CDC estimates that every year in the United States, there are over 48 million illnesses, 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths caused by foodborne illnesses. This means 1-in-every-6 people in the US will get sick from eating food! When dining out, we are very trusting that the cooks behind the kitchen doors are handling our food safely. It is the primary goal of my program to reduce the risk of foodborne illness in food establishments in the City. Our inspections are focused around several risk factors (i.e., improper food temperatures, food handling procedures, food worker health and food safety knowledge). We utilize a three-prong approach with our inspections: 1. education, 2. survey, and 3. enforcement.

What advice would you give to individuals dining out?

Food is meant to be enjoyed, but be cautious where you eat. Pay close attention to the posting in the window. If it looks sketchy, go somewhere else...your colon will thank you!

What are some differences between LA County and Long Beach inspection grading system?

Having worked for both of these Environmental Health jurisdictions, I have first-hand knowledge on these two very different approaches to public risk notification. LA County is famous for implementing their Letter Grading System. In the late 1990s, the Long Beach City Council decided to adopt the unique Inspection Summary Report window posting. Both systems are designed to give the public an idea of what their risks are in getting a foodborne illness based on the most recent routine inspection from Environmental Health. The Inspection Summary Report gives the consumer a detailed list of 14 different food safety categories on which major violations were observed during the inspection.

Do your programs collaborate with other programs at the Health Department?

Most definitely! This is why I truly enjoy working here. I have been able to work on many interesting cases in collaboration with our outstanding Epidemiology staff, Lab staff, and our Health Officer. In LA County, due to the size of their department and geography, I never met any people from Epidemiology, Laboratory, or the Health Officer. In fact, when I am talking about our Department to my fellow REHSs from other jurisdictions, they are very jealous of the great working relationship and proximity that we have here. At any time, I can easily just walk down the hallway to Epi, Lab, or Dr. K's office. This has been extremely beneficial in addressing foodborne or waterborne outbreaks. This is a great thing about having a local city health department!



Keith with his family at the 2014 World Series in San Francisco.

What did you want to be when you were younger?

I have always been fascinated with astronomy and NASA, and I wanted to be an astronaut, probably like most kids...but then reality sunk in and I am very grateful for the career path that I have chosen. I have met a lot of great people along the way. When I retire in 20 years, I want to write a book on some of the interesting things that I encountered throughout my career as an REHS.

What do you do with your free time?

Most of my free time is spent with my family (my lovely wife Gina and our amazing three-year-old daughter Hannah). I enjoy traveling, cycling, Disneyland, and going to a lot of baseball games (GO GIANTS!!!). I have been to 18 current MLB stadiums, and hope to see all 30 someday. Now here comes my inner nerd. I regularly collect Superman comic books and have a collection of autographed baseballs. I also volunteer at my church.

Please tell us more about yourself?

I grew up in San Pedro and moved to Long Beach after I graduated with my bachelor's degree from CSULB. I was the first person in my family to obtain a bachelor's and master's degree. I have dual citizenship (US and Italy). I have been fortunate to travel to 37 different states in the US, also to Italy, Monaco, France, Spain, Canada, Mexico and Costa Rica. I am currently the 2015-2018 National Environmental Health Association Region-2 Vice President, which covers REHSs in Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada. I am also a part-time faculty member at CSULA in the Department of Public Health, where I have taught undergrad Public Health courses for over eight years.



Keith bikes down the Haleakala Volcano in Maui.

TIPS ON PREVENTING A HEATSTROKE

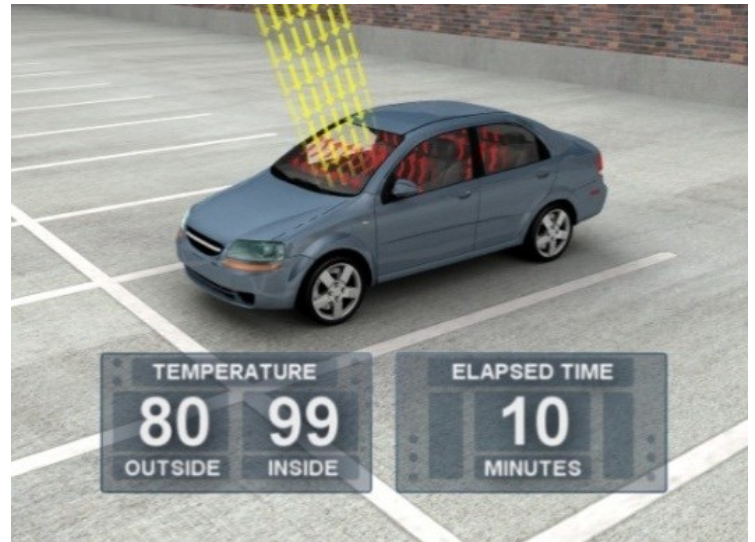
Submitted by Morgan Venter, Health Educator

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Heatstroke is the #1 cause of non-crash, vehicle-related deaths for children ages 14 and under.

10

Number of minutes it takes the inside of a car to heat up 20 degrees (cracking the window doesn't help).



- A child's body heats up three to five times faster than an adult's body.
- More than half of heatstroke deaths occurred when a distracted caregiver forgot a quiet child was in the vehicle. Creating reminders and habits is an effective way to ensure that a child is not forgotten in the vehicle.
- Plan to have a cool, air-conditioned space for your child on particularly hot days. If your home does not have air-conditioning, find a nearby building that does.
- Make sure your child stays hydrated. Encourage him/her to drink water regularly, even before he/she asks for it.
- When your child is feeling hot, give him/her a cool bath or water mist to cool down.

For more information visit <http://www.safekids.org/preventing-heatstroke>.

FIGHTING THE STIGMA OF MENTAL HEALTH

By Patti LaPlace, Mental Health Coordinator

We have all been guilty of calling someone crazy, mental, looney tunes etc. Our intentions are not to be damaging or belittling, however maybe at times we may have said it out of anger or frustration with a particular individual.

Throughout history, mental illness has been labeled as many things. The majority of these labels have not been flattering and in many cases led to a misunderstanding of the nature of this disease. Individuals experiencing symptoms of mental illness have endured many types of inhumane treatments and interventions. Some of these interfaces have resulted in long term incarceration and at times even death.

This is a new era. We now have a better understanding of mental illness. We know that many individuals (1 out of 4) will experience a mental health condition with themselves or a loved one. People such as actors, politicians and community leaders are coming out of the closet about their experience with mental illness. Sometimes, it is not until someone commits suicide that we realize they were struggling. We are often shocked, and question why this individual did not seek help sooner. In many cases, it is because of stigma and shame.

The City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services wants to change the perception of Mental Illness with the community. The Mental Health Strategic Planning committee has been working diligently to address the stigma of mental health and to be an advocate for individuals living in Long Beach who have

been impacted by mental illness in some way. At the Public Health Week Conference on April 9, 2015 the committee piloted a messaging campaign to solicit feedback from Health Department employees via a survey on our "Healthy Mind, Healthy Me, Healthy LB" message. Out of 135 surveys completed, 106 employees and community members "loved" the message and 28 stated "liked it, good enough". The committee was excited about the results and it was evident in the comments of the surveys that the committee seems to be on the right track. Some of the key comments included the need to outreach with positive message slogans about mental health, more community events and more engaging in dialogue with our clients regarding the need to take care of the mind, as well as the body.

On May 21, 2015 the Mental Health Strategic Planning Committee, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, provided an educational luncheon that addressed reducing the stigma of Mental Health. Kathleen Piche, LCSW, Head of Marketing and Communications with the Department showed the Emmy Award winning video series "Profiles of Hope" featuring Paris Barclay, Mariel Hemingway and Rick Springfield. This video presentation provided an in-depth portrait of their struggles with mental illness and recovery. A short discussion was held after the videos to solicit input from Health Department staff on how to best move forward with our anti-stigma campaign to promote hope, wellness and recovery in the Long Beach Community.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT APPOINTS NEW HOMELESS SERVICES OFFICER

By Kelly Colopy, Health and Human Services Director



Teresa Chandler

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Teresa Chandler, MPH to the position of Homeless Services Officer for the Community Health Bureau in the Department of Health and Human Services.

As Homeless Services Officer, Teresa will be responsible for the overall strategic planning, systems development and coordination for the Homeless Services Division and the Continuum of Care (CoC). The Division provides citywide and interdepartmental response for chronic homelessness, resource coordination of the Long Beach CoC including operations of the Multi-Service Center, and liaison with the Villages at Cabrillo campus. She will represent the department and the city in local and regional best practice work on the issue of homelessness.

Teresa has a Master's Degree in Public Health and more than 15 years of management experience in both public and nonprofit organization work. Most recently, she was the Regional Director of Community Services for the Children's Institute, Inc. in Los Angeles where she cultivated and maintained on-going relationships with county agencies, schools, community organizations and other resources as necessary to affect services and build community capacity. Her breadth of skills with program development, contract management, community engagement and personnel oversight will be an asset to the Homeless Services Division.

Teresa is located in the Main Health Building, 2525 Grand Avenue, Suite 235. She can be reached at (562)570-4011 or at teresa.chandler@longbeach.gov.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT APPOINTS NEW CLINICAL SERVICES OFFICER

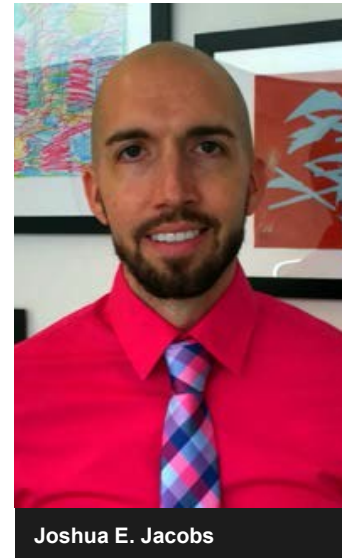
By Kelly Colopy, Health and Human Services Director

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Joshua Jacobs to the position of Clinical Services Officer for the Physician Services Bureau in the Department of Health and Human Services.

As Clinical Services Officer, Joshua will be responsible for the overall strategic vision and planning, contract compliance, and systems development and coordination of the Clinical Services Division. This includes the clinical areas of Tuberculosis Control, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Family Planning, Immunizations and Travel Immunizations and HIV care clinics. He will oversee a staff of 59, with seven direct reports.

Prior to his relocation to Southern California in 2014, Joshua was Division Manager for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention for the Kalamazoo County Michigan Department of Public Health, and was promoted to Deputy Director/Deputy Health Officer for the Department. Most recently, he served as Senior Director of Programs for the AIDS Services Foundation of Orange County where he was responsible for the planning and oversight of Clinical Services, Housing and Benefits, Support Services, Family Programs and Prevention and Health Education. Joshua has demonstrated experience in leading and initiating clinical services and executing managed care contracts. His overall experience and accomplishments will be an asset to strengthening existing services for the Department and establishing additional sources of revenue.

Joshua is located in the Main Health Building, 2525 Grand Avenue, Suite 104. He can be reached at (562)570-4304 or at joshua.jacobs@longbeach.gov.



Joshua E. Jacobs

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